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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PASS TO AMEMBASSY PODGORICA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 2018-12-04
TAGS: [PREL](#) [OSCE](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [UZ](#)
SUBJECT: UZBEKISTAN: DEMARCHE ON THE HELSINKI OSCE MINISTERIAL

REF: a) 08 STATE 125626

CLASSIFIED BY: BERLINER, NICHOLAS; (B), (D)

11. (C) Pol-Econ Chief discussed reftel points with Uzbek MFA UN and International Organizations Division Head Karomiddin Gadoev on December 3. Karomiddin noted that, for the first time in three years (i.e. since Andijon), Uzbekistan would be represented in Helsinki at the ministerial level by Foreign Minister Norov, which he said was a reflection of the GOU's decision to re-engage, not only with the OSCE, but with the West more generally. Although he expressed some of the usual Uzbek complaints about the OSCE's emphasis on the Human Dimension, he noted that Uzbekistan was satisfied with its cooperation with the OSCE and hopes that projects will be expanded in 2009. He expressed skepticism that agreement could be reached on a declaration in Helsinki, saying that Uzbekistan believed the OSCE should be reformed to reflect post-Cold War realities - predictably, this was by way of implying that over-emphasis on human rights and democracy creates an impediment to consensus within the OSCE, which the GOU would like to see more focused on economic cooperation and security.

12. (C) Karomiddin said that Uzbekistan had received a copy of Russia's proposal for a new European security treaty, which he said his government was still studying and would make its opinion known at a later date. On the issue of Georgia, he said that Uzbekistan's position was unchanged from that expressed in the CSTO (critical of Georgia, but stopping short of recognizing Abkhazia and South Ossetia).

13. (C) Comment: This meeting offered further confirmation that Uzbekistan's senior leadership has made a strategic decision to re-engage after its post-Andijon isolation. Although nothing is easy about engaging the Uzbeks, we have an opportunity to push the envelope of our own engagement, both bilaterally and multilaterally through the OSCE, UN and others.
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